
A
SHORT ACCOUNT

OF SOME OF THE

Proceedings of the DEPUTIES and COMMITTEE,
appointed to take Care of the Civil Affairs of
the DISSENTERS.

In the Year 1737.

THEY procured Relief for the dissenting-Inhabitants
of *St. Olaves Southwark*, *St. Leonard Shoreditch*, and *St.
Mary Rotherbith*, from some Oppressions intended and
attempted to be brought upon them, by certain Clauses
in Bills then depending, for the rebuilding or repairing
their respective Parish Churches.

ON this Occasion they found the Necessity of retaining and em-
ploying a Solicitor: And they accordingly appointed the most pro-
per Person they could find to this Service.

THE same Year they assisted two dissenting School-Masters in de-
fending themselves against Prosecutions wherewith they had been
threatened:

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AND settled likewise a Correspondence with the most proper Persons they could find, in every County in *England*.

In 1738.

THEY procured a Motion to be made in the House of Commons for the Repeal or Explanation of the Corporation and Test Acts: They drew up, printed and distributed among the Members, Reasons for such a Repeal: And at a considerable Expence dispersed divers Pamphlets in Vindication of that Repeal.

In 1739.

THEY resolved to defend any Meeting-House in the City which should be assessed and charged to the Watch; and thereby prevented the repeating such illegal and unreasonable Demands.

THEY assisted another School-Master under Prosecution for keeping a School.

THE Justices of the Peace in *Montgomeryshire* refused this Year to license and record some Houses designed for dissenting Meeting-Places. The COMMITTEE hereupon procured the Attorney General's Opinion on the Case; who declared the Refusal illegal, and directed to proper Means of Redress: On the Sight of which the Justices thought fit to comply.

In 1740.

THE COMMITTEE were applied to for their Assistance and Countenance in an important Affair, depending before the King in Council, relating to the civil Rights of our Presbyterian and Congregational Brethren in *New England*; and they accordingly gave all necessary and friendly Attendance on that Business.

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THIS Year, at the Request of the Parties concerned, they undertook the Defence of a Baptist Minister, who had been illegally and maliciously appointed Church-Warden of the Parish where he resided. On the Parishioners being made acquainted with this Resolution, they thought fit to desist from their Appointment of him, and chose another to that Office in his room.

ANOTHER dissenting School-Master applied to them this Year, to whom they gave proper Advice and Assistance.

In 1741.

THEY prosecuted several Rioters, who had insulted the Congregation of Baptists at *Stratton* in *Wiltshire*; and had particularly, in a most barbarous Manner, abused both the Person and Family of one of them who lived at *Swindon*: And by this Prosecution they restored the Peace of that Place and Neighbourhood.

In 1742.

THEY recommended and attempted to establish a Register of the Births of the Children of Protestant Dissenters of the three Denominations; and of the Baptism of such of their Children as should be baptized in their Infancy.

N. B. There is such a Register at the Library in *Red-Cross-Street*.

ABOUT this Time another School-Master was threatened with a vexatious Prosecution, whom the COMMITTEE advised and assisted in the best Manner they were able: And in this, as well as in the other Instances, as far as they know, with Success.

ON Application made to them, they advised some Protestant Dissenters in the Country not to comply with the Demands of a Clergyman, who claimed his customary Fees for churching their Wives, though the Women had never been at Church; for marrying their
Men,

Men, though they were married in another Parish, and by another Minister; and for burying their Dead, though buried in their own burying Ground, and no Service had been read over them: And on the Promise of the COMMITTEE to defend them, if they were prosecuted for not complying, these illegal unreasonable Claims have not been repeated.

THIS Year Mr. *Robert Grosvenor*, a Protestant Dissenter, who never had, and always scrupled to take the Sacrament according to the Usage of the Church of *England*, as a Qualification for an Office, was chosen Sheriff of *London* and *Middlesex*. The COMMITTEE encouraged Mr. *Grosvenor* to refuse this Office; apprehending he was not capable of serving, or being elected into, such an Office, by reason of the Corporation Act: And judging this a Point of great Importance to the Dissenters throughout *England*, especially to such of them as are free of the City of *London*, thought it became them to undertake his Defence: And accordingly, when the City moved for an Information against him, the COMMITTEE engaged several eminent Council to appear in his Behalf: The Court unanimously refused the Information. Since that the City have brought an Action of Debt against him, which, after having taken several Steps in, they have thought fit to drop.

In 1743.

THE Justices of *Radnor*, and their Clerk, refused to license and register a Place designed for the Religious Worship of Dissenters. The COMMITTEE moved the Court of King's Bench for a Mandamus: On which the Justices complied.

THE same Year the COMMITTEE interposed in Behalf of their Brethren in *Anglesea*, disturbed and abused by a riotous Mob; and obtained an Information against several of the Rioters, which has restored the Peace of that Place,

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AND about the same Time they obtained a Clause to be inserted in the Act for the better lighting the City of *London*, by which the dissenting Meeting-Houses are kept from being assessed at the Discretion of the Alderman and Common Council of their respective Wards; and are henceforth set on the same Foot with all other Buildings of a like Nature.

In 1744.

THE COMMITTEE were desired, and thought fit, to interpose with relation to some Disorders and Animosities that had lately risen in the Province of *Conneticut*: They drew up and sent such Letters of Advice as seemed to them most likely to put an End to those Disorders, and restore the Peace of the Colony.

ABOUT this Time the melancholly Situation of the Dissenters at *Wolverhampton* in *Staffordshire*, was represented to the COMMITTEE. They had put their late Minister in Possession of the Meeting-House, a Dwelling-House, and divers Writings belonging to the Society. These he refused to deliver up now they have dismissed him; unless they were recovered, the Dissenting Interest, lately in flourishing Circumstances, could not be kept up; the COMMITTEE therefore ordered a Bill to be filed in Chancery, against Mr. *Barr*, their late Minister; to which he has given in his Answer.

THIS Year a Country Clergyman refused to bury one or more of his dissenting Parishioners deceased; and prosecuted another of his Parishioners, in the Spiritual Court, for assisting in throwing in the Earth in the Church-Yard, upon one of those Bodies which he had refused to bury. The COMMITTEE interposed, and found Means to make the Rector withdraw his Suit; and they have Reason to hope, from the Issue of that Affair, there will be no more Grounds for Complaints of that Nature, either in that Town or Neighbourhood.

In 1745.

THE COMMITTEE received Complaints of several illegal Proceedings, nearly affecting the Civil Rights of divers of their Brethren in *Caernarvonshire*. Some of the Dissenters had been impressed, though so circumstanced as to be manifestly excepted by the Act of Parliament; the Justices had refused to license some Places designed for their Religious Worship; and one of their Ministers had been grossly abused as he was going to preach.

THE COMMITTEE have procured the Discharge of the Man who had been illegally impressed; their Meeting-Houses have been since licensed; and we have heard of no fresh Insults or Oppressions in that Country since.

In 1746.

AN Address from the Pastors of the several Churches in *New-England*, was sent over to Dr. *Avery*, as Chairman of the Deputies; and was by him, and *Eliakim Palmer*, Esq; presented to his Majesty, and very graciously received.

THE COMMITTEE about this Time set on Foot a Subscription for defraying the Charges of the DEPUTATION.

AN Incroachment having been made on the Meeting-House, and the Ground belonging to it, at *Brentwood*, in the County of *Essex*, the COMMITTEE, on Application being made to them, resolved to assist the Dissenters there in maintaining their Right; and, as soon as this was known, the Incroachment was removed; and they have continued, and are likely to continue, in the peaceable Possession of their Meeting-House and its Appurtenances; and have sent the DEPUTIES and the COMMITTEE their Thanks for their good Offices.

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A PROSECUTION in the Spiritual Court was commenced against one *Greenwood*, for living in Fornication with his own Wife; because he had not been married according to the Rites of the Church of *England*, but in the Congregation of Protestant Dissenters, of which he was a Member: And this he pleaded was a Matter of Conscience with him. This Prosecution, if carried on, must have ended in the utter Ruin of the Man. The COMMITTEE could not think the Man had acted prudently or legally in this Matter; but yet, in Compassion to him, they thought fit so far to interpose, as to endeavour to engage the Prosecutor to drop his Suit; and were so happy as to prevail with him to put an End to all Proceedings against the poor Man in the Spiritual Court.

COMPLAINT was made that the Chancellor of *Bangor* had used several Dissenters in *Anglesea*, and other Parts of that Diocese, in a cruel Manner, by citing them, and proceeding against them, in his Court, upon various frivolous Pretences. The COMMITTEE, upon hearing the Case, procured for them the best Advice they could; and so effectually assisted them, as to put an End to these oppressive Proceedings.

In 1747.

Two School-Masters in *Suffolk* had been cited into the Spiritual Court, for keeping a School without a Licence, and applied to the COMMITTEE for Advice how to act; who thereupon sent them such Instructions and Advices, as, having been followed, have prevented the Continuance, or Renewal, of any such vexatious Prosecutions.

A Clergyman in *Lincolnshire* refused to bury a Parishioner, who died there, without a Certificate that the Deceased had been baptized according to the Rites of the Church of *England*. The COMMITTEE, on being applied to, found Means to make the Rector ashamed of his Conduct; and have Reason to hope, that they have

prevented any such illegal and uncharitable Behaviour, in that Parish and Neighbourhood, for the Time to come.

THE Dissenters at *Maesyroney* in *Wales*, had a Legacy of Twenty Pounds left them, the Interest of which was to be annually paid to the Dissenting Minister there for the Time being; but the Trustee of the said Legacy refused to pay it. The DEPUTATION was applied to for Advice and Assistance: They declined entering into a Chancery Suit for so small a Sum, but immediately ordered a Letter to be wrote to the said Trustee; which, they have had the Satisfaction of hearing, produced the desired Effect.

In 1748.

THE Dissenters at *Great Yarmouth* in *Norfolk*, found themselves aggrieved by a Rate for the Support of an Organ, erected some Years ago by voluntary Contribution. When the Case was sent to the COMMITTEE, they procured the best Opinions they could upon it, both in *Doxor's-Commons* and *Westminster-Hall*: For which they received the Thanks of their Friends there; and have been since assured, that the Affair is fully settled to the Satisfaction of the Dissenters in that Town.

SEVERAL Dissenters of *Watesfield* in *Suffolk*, whose Children had been refused Burial there, on Pretence of their not having been baptized, have sent up Complaints on that Head to the COMMITTEE, who have endeavoured, and still are endeavouring, to oblige the particular Clergyman concerned, to act a more reasonable Part.

In 1749.

A DISSENTING School-Master at *Henley* upon *Thames*, was threatened with a Prosecution in the Spiritual Court, for keeping School without a Licence; and thereupon desired the Advice and Assistance
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of the COMMITTEE; who immediately instructed him, as well as they were able, how he should proceed; and as there has been no fresh Complaint, it is hoped the Advice then given him was attended with Success.

A CONSIDERABLE Legacy was, some Years ago, left for the Support of a Protestant Dissenting Congregation in *Carolina*. But the Persons who were, by the Will, intrusted with the Money, have refused to pay it, or account for either Principal or Interest to the Minister or the Congregation. Mr. *Henry Heywood*, who is at present the Minister of that Congregation, sent over Letters to the DEPUTATION, desiring their Assistance; and particularly requesting, that they would furnish him with some Evidence, or Precedents of Legacies given to Dissenting Ministers or Congregations, that had been adjudged and ordered by the Court of *Chancery*, to be paid to such Dissenters: And in Answer to his Request the COMMITTEE, by Order of the DEPUTIES, did procure a Copy of a Decree of the Court of *Chancery* in a Cause of that Nature, and sent it over to him.

It was reported, and generally believed, that there was a Design on Foot to erect two new Bishopricks in the *West-Indies*. This the DEPUTIES thought, and have since been well assured, would be very disagreeable to many of our Friends in those Parts; and highly prejudicial to the Interests of several of the Colonies. They therefore appointed two of their Body to wait on some of his Majesty's principal Servants, and to acquaint them with their Sentiments on this Subject: Which was accordingly done; and the Persons deputed were very civilly received: And whatever the Event may be, the Part the DEPUTATION has acted, has been so kindly taken Abroad, that the House of Representatives of the Province of the *Massachusetts Bay*, have returned them their Thanks, in a Message signed by their Speaker.

William David left, in his last Will, one Hundred Pounds, towards

wards the Support of a Dissenting Meeting in *Glamorganshire*: The Heir at Law contested the Validity of the Legacy. The COMMITTEE, on being acquainted with the Case, took the Attorney General's Opinion upon it; and sent it down with their Advice to the Parties concerned, who have returned their Thanks; and promised to make the best Use they can of the friendly Assistance given them; and have Hopes that it will be attended with Success.

THE Clergy in *Carmarthenshire* have lately made a Demand on the Dissenters there for baptizing their Children, though they were not baptized by them, but by Dissenting Ministers; and some of the Dissenters have been cited into the Spiritual Court for refusing to pay what has been thus demanded. The COMMITTEE, being made acquainted with their Case, have advised and assisted them in so effectual a Manner, that the Prosecutions on that Account are dropped; and the Clergyman who cited them, has been obliged to pay Costs.

COMPLAINT has been made by Mr. *Handcock*, Dissenting Minister at *Tenterden* in *Kent*, of an outrageous Insult that had been offered him, at a Funeral, by Mr. *Holland*, Curate there: and the COMMITTEE have advised Mr. *Handcock* how to act on this Occasion; and are endeavouring to procure him Redress.

In 1750.

THE COMMITTEE this Year again renewed their utmost Endeavours to prevent the introducing a VICAR-GENERAL, or BISHOP, into *America*; and hitherto the Design and Attempt of that kind has not succeeded.

UPON Complaints from *Crookham*, about the Church Minister demanding Fees for Churching of Women, though nothing had been asked of him, or done by him, and other Impositions; the
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COMMITTEE took the Advice of Council ; and wrote a Letter of Advice to the Dissenters there how to behave, in order to put an End to such Impositions ; which it is hoped, and believed, had the desired Effect.

UPON another Complaint of Mr. *Walter Thomas*, a Dissenting Minister at *Wincaunton* in *Somersetshire*, that he had been presented by the Grand Jury for preaching in the House of Mr. *Samuel Richards*, at *Bruton*, as not licensed ; and Mr. *Richards* for being present at the preaching : the COMMITTEE gave their Advice in that Case ; and, among other Things, directed that Search should be made if the said House had not been registred many Years ago ; and upon such Search it was found that the House had been registred at the Quarter Sessions 3 *W. & M.* which put an End to any further Proceedings upon the said Presentments.

Mr. *Barr*, the late Minister of *Wolverhampton*, delivered up to the Dissenters there, the Meeting-House and Dwelling-House, which, for a long Time past, he had forcibly detained from them ; and for the Recovery of which the COMMITTEE had been obliged to begin a Suit in *Chancery* against the said *Barr*.

COMPLAINT having been made from *Hinkley* about some Injuries done to the Meeting House in the Night-time, by Persons unknown ; the COMMITTEE applied to the Speaker, in Order to obtain an Act or Clause for Redress of the Grievances complained of ; and also, by the Speaker's Direction, waited on the Attorney General for his Advice therein ; with which the Dissenters at *Hinkley* were acquainted ; and we have heard of no Disturbances there since.

SOME Dissenters at *Cirencester* being sued in the Spiritual Court for refusing to pay Fees demanded of them by the Clerk of the Parish, the COMMITTEE advised them to persist in such Refusal ; such Demands being illegal.

In 1751.

Mr. *St. John* having refused for eight Years past to pay a yearly Salary to the School-Master of *Odibam*, (who was the Dissenting Minister there) payable out of his Estate that he had purchased of Mr. *Zouch* : The COMMITTEE took the Opinion of the Attorney General on the Case, and have, and are still using their Endeavours to obtain Payment of the said Salary.

UPON Complaint of a Riot that happened at *Walsall* in *Staffordshire*, in which the Meeting-House was pulled down ; the COMMITTEE informed the Ministry thereof ; who undertook to prosecute the said Rioters ; which was accordingly done : and the COMMITTEE received the Thanks of the Dissenters at *Walsall* for their good Offices in that Affair.

In 1752.

UPON Complaint from *Virginia*, of the Behaviour of the Governor and Council there, in taking away a Licence that had been granted by the County Court, of a House for Religious Worship of Protestant Dissenters ; the COMMITTEE took the Attorney General's Opinion on the Case ; and sent the same to the Persons who were immediately concerned at *Virginia*, to direct their Conduct in the said Affair ; and are taking other Measures to have the said Grievance redressed.

UPON Complaint from *Hitchin* of an Order of the Trustees of a Free-School there, excluding Protestant Dissenters Children from the said School ; the Attorney General's Opinion was taken about the Validity of such Order : and upon that Opinion the COMMITTEE have used their Endeavours to have the said Order revoked. And the same has been suspended ; and the Dissenters there have been assured it shall not be executed.

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THE COMMITTEE obtained a Clause in the Indemnifying Act to be left out, which might have proved detrimental to the Dissenting Interest.

In 1753.

THE COMMITTEE undertook to use their Endeavours to recover the 500*l.* bequeathed to Trustees (by Mrs. *Merryweather's* Will,) for the Benefit of the Minister of the Dissenting Congregation where the late Mr. *Welberley* was Pastor, the said Legacy being claimed by one of the Trustees; against whom a Suit in *Chancery* hath been commenced, for the Establishment of the said Trust.

THE COMMITTEE advised and assisted a School-Master at *Sudbury*, who was cited into the Spiritual Court for keeping School without a Licence.

In 1754.

THE COMMITTEE again obtained a Clause to be left out in the Indemnifying Act, which, if it had stood, might have proved very prejudicial to the Dissenters.

UPON a Letter from Mr. *Philips*, of *Kingsley* in *Cheshire*, desiring Advice whether he might christen Children of the Church People in an unlicensed Place; the COMMITTEE gave their Advice to him according to his Desire.

THE COMMITTEE this Year undertook the Defence of several Gentlemen in refusing to serve the Office of Sheriff for the City of *London* and County of *Middlesex*, in Case they were nominated and elected thereto, they being disqualified by Law to serve the same, as Dissenters.

THE COMMITTEE this Year gave their Advice, and assisted a Dissenting Congregation, at *Malsbury* in *Wils*, about the Recovery

covery of an Annuity of 15 *l. per Annum*, given to the said Congregation.

In 1755.

THE COMMITTEE this Year gave their Advice and Instructions to the Dissenting Ministers in *Virginia*, how to apply for licensing of Houses for Religious Worship there.

A COMPLAINT being made this Year, by a Dissenting Minister, from *Glamorganshire* in *South-Wales*, about a Meeting-House there, which had been shut up by one of the Trustees thereof: The COMMITTEE took the Affair into Consideration; and ordered several Letters to be sent to the Parties concerned in those Oppressions, which had so good an Effect, as to get the Meeting-House soon opened; and the Minister and Congregation restored to the peaceable Possession thereof.

THE COMMITTEE commenced a Suit in *Chancery* on the Behalf of some Dissenters, at *Arnsby* in *Leicestershire*, against one *Hackett*, for the Recovery of an Estate left to them; and proceeded therein as far as Council advised.

MR. *Stokes*, a Dissenting Minister at *Woolwich*, having this Year been shut out of the Meeting-House there, applied to the COMMITTEE for their Assistance, which Matter they took into Consideration; and after several Applications to and Meetings with the Trustees and others concerned, got Mr. *Stokes* restored to the peaceable Possession and Enjoyment of the said Meeting-House.

THE COMMITTEE applied to the Common Council of the City of *London*, for Liberty to inspect the City Books, in order to enable them to defend the Prosecutions brought by the City against Dissenters for refusing to serve the Office of Sheriff there, which was refused them, and they were forced into a Chancery Suit, by which they obtained Liberty to inspect, though at a great Expence.

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In 1756.

THE COMMITTEE this Year revived the Correspondence of the DEPUTATION with the Country.

THE COMMITTEE assisted the Congregation, late Mr. *Wetberley's*, and established the Trust of 500 *l.* given to the said Congregation, by a Decree in the Court of Chancery.

COMPLAINTS being made this Year about licensing Meeting-Houses in *Virginia*; the COMMITTEE waited on Persons here in Power. And gave their Advice to the Dissenting Ministers there how to proceed in that Matter, which had the desired Effect.

THIS Year the COMMITTEE assisted some Dissenters of the Borough of *Carmarthen* in *Wales*, who were under Prosecution upon a *Quo Warranto*.

In 1757.

THIS Year a Dissenting Minister at *Malden* in *Essex*, being threatened with a Prosecution for teaching School: The COMMITTEE gave Directions how to behave in that Matter.

THE COMMITTEE this Year interceded (on Behalf of the Dissenters in *Connecticut*) with the Governors there, on Account of the People of the established Religion obliging the Dissenters to pay towards the Support of the Ministers of that Establishment.

APPLICATION being made this Year to the COMMITTEE from a Province in *New-England*, about appointing a new Secretary there, (the late Secretary being dead). The COMMITTEE waited on proper Persons here, and used their Endeavour to get a Person to succeed in the said Office, agreeable to the Dissenting Interest in those Parts; in which they succeeded.

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THE COMMITTEE this Year waited on several Members of the House of Commons, that the Exercise of the Militia might not be on the Lord's Day ; and succeeded.

THIS Year Judgment was given in the Sheriff's Court against *Evans*, and against *Sheafe*, to pay their Fines, with Costs, from which they appealed to the Court of Hustings ; but before Writs of Error could be allowed there, it was necessary a Bond should be entered into in each of the Causes, with two Sureties, for Payment of the Fines and Costs, under a double Penalty. The COMMITTEE therefore prevailed with Mr. *Mauduit*, and Mr. *Crisp*, two of their Body, to become Sureties, which they complied with.

In 1758.

To prevent unnecessary Expence in the Causes, (the Chamberlain of the City of *London* against *Evans*, and the same against *Sheafe*,) Application was made to the Common Council of the City of *London*, to consent that only one Cause might be proceeded in in Error, the Defendant consenting that the Cause that stood still should abide the Event of that Cause that was proceeded in ; but they refused to consent thereto, and insisted that *both* Causes should proceed.

THE COMMITTEE considered of a Method for carrying on a Correspondence in the Country.

In 1759.

ORDERED Notices of the Registering of Births of Children at Dr. *Williams's* Library, to every Minister or Congregation in and about *London*, for making the same more known.

JUDGMENT having been given for the City of *London* against *Evans* and *Sheafe*, in the Sheriff's Court, for their refusing to serve the Office of Sheriff of the City of *London*, and the Recorder of the City having affirmed the said Judgment in the Court of
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Hustings. The COMMITTEE petitioned for a Writ of Error in each of the said Causes, to a Court of Delegates, consisting of five Judges to be named for that Purpose, to examine the Errors, if any, in the said Causes, at the Guildhall of the City of *London*; and which said Writs of Error were obtained accordingly.

In 1760.

Mr. *Dolman*, a Dissenting Minister, complained to the COMMITTEE of an Insult that he had received from several Persons at *Clapham*, while he was preaching there in a Meeting-House legally licensed; and for demolishing part of the said Meeting-House at another Time. The COMMITTEE thereupon appeared on the Behalf of Mr. *Dolman*. And the Rioters, or some, or one of them, repaired the Damage done to the said Meeting-House, and paid Mr. *Dolman* his Charges, and something for the Trouble he had been put to on that Account.

The COMMITTEE prosecuted the Writs of Error in *Evans* and *Sheafe's* Causes, before the Court of Delegates.

In 1761.

THE Case of the Dissenters at *Plymouth*, who had fallen out among themselves about their Place of Worship and their Minister, being laid before the COMMITTEE, they recommended them to Peace, and to leave all Matters in Difference to Arbitration, and not go to Law.

THE COMMITTEE prosecuted the Writs of Error in the Causes of *Evans* and *Sheafe*, before the Court of Delegates.

In 1762.

The COMMITTEE undertook the Defence of Mr. *John Hughes*, Dissenting Minister at *Haverford-West*, who was prosecuted for teaching

ing School ; and he, following their Advice, the Prosecution was dropt, and they received his Letter of Thanks.

ON the 5th of *July* in this Year, four of the Judges named in the said Writs of Error in the Causes of *Evans* and *Sheafe*, viz. Lord Chief Baron *Parker*, Mr. Justice *Foster*, Mr. Justice *Batburst*, and Mr. Justice *Wilmot*, (the other Judge named in the said Writs of Error, viz. Lord Chief Justice *Willes*, being dead,) came to the Guildhall of the City of *London*, and delivered their Opinion *seriatim* in the Causes of *Evans* and *Sheafe*, and were unanimously agreed upon the real Merits of the Case, That the Defendants, *Evans* and *Sheafe*, were not eligible to the Office of the Sheriff of the City of *London*, by the Corporation and Toleration Acts ; and therefore they reversed the Judgment given in the Sheriff's Court, and the Affirmance thereof in the Court of *Hustings*.

THE Dissenters at *Boston* in *New-England* having desired the Assistance of the COMMITTEE in an Affair of Importance to the Interest of Religion and Learning in that Part of the World : the COMMITTEE agreed to give them the Assistance desired, and appointed a Sub-Committee for that Purpose.

In 1763.

MR. *Evan Williams* was cited into the Spiritual Court for baptizing a Child ; and the Mother also for not being Churched : The COMMITTEE undertook the Defence of both, and succeeded.

THE Justices for *Anglesea* refusing to license a Meeting-House there : Application was made to the COMMITTEE, who took several Methods to bring them to comply, but they continue to refuse. The COMMITTEE are now taking Measures to compel them to it.

In 1764.

SOME Dissenters applied to the COMMITTEE, who had been formerly

merly cited into the Spiritual Court, (for not bringing their Children to be christened by their Parish Minister, and their Wives to be church'd; and their Minister to shew his Qualification for baptizing) and were again all cited to appear at the Visitation at *Oswestry*. The COMMITTEE interposed, and put a Stop to any further Proceedings.

A COMPLAINT was also made by some Dissenters at *Welford*, of a Charge made upon them, by the Minister, for churching their Wives. The COMMITTEE advised them how to act, which had the desired Success.

A COMPLAINT was made to them of a Distress on a Meeting-House in *Rotherbith*, for the Scavengers-Rate. The COMMITTEE ordered their Clerk to recover the same, which he did.

Two Baptist Ministers in *Lincolnshire*, applied for Relief against the Justices, who refused them Licences; and the COMMITTEE advised them how to act.

A School-Master in *Gloucestershire* being prosecuted in the Spiritual Court, for keeping a Dissenting School. He applied to the COMMITTEE for help; they advised him what to do, which stopped the Prosecution.

THE Minister at *Llanvigan* refused to bury a Child, because it was baptised by a Dissenting Minister. The Father complained to the COMMITTEE, and they obliged the Minister to make him Satisfaction.

In 1765.

THE COMMITTEE obtained, for a Congregation at *Tredweston* in *Breconsbire*, the Payment of an Annuity, which had been withheld; and also that the same should be regularly paid for the future.

THE Justices for the County of *Anglesea*, still continuing their
Refusal

Refusal to license the Meeting-House which the COMMITTEE had for some Time been using Methods to oblige them to; having obtained a Mandamus, and not being able to get it served by any Attorney in that Country, were obliged to send down a special Messenger for that Purpose; in Consequence of which the Justices complied; and it had so good an Effect, that upon an after Application to the said Justices, to register another Place for Religious Worship, they did it immediately: So that the Dissenters there, will probably meet with no further Opposition on that Account.

In 1766.

APPLICATION was made to the COMMITTEE, from the Dissenters in several Parts of *Derbyshire*, to assist them in getting five different Places registred, all of which had been refused by the Justices. The COMMITTEE applied to the Court of King's Bench, to grant a Mandamus for one of them, which being obtained, was sent down; and had so good an Effect, that they not only registred that Place, but on Demand, registred all the rest. The Justices also granted a Certificate to a Baptist Minister, which they had before absolutely refused.

A Meeting-House in *London* was assessed to the Watch, the Scavenger, and the Poor; upon Application to the COMMITTEE, they procured Redress.

THIS Year the COMMITTEE printed 1000 Cases on the Sheriff's Cause, to be given to the Peers.

In 1767.

SOME Congregations applied to the COMMITTEE to determine disputed Elections, in the Choice of Ministers, each Side alleging that the Majority of fair Electors was with them; and each requesting that the COMMITTEE would give their Opinion in their Favour.
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The COMMITTEE found them differ widely in describing those who ought to Vote; and also that they had no stated Rule to ascertain either who had, or who had not, a Right to Vote: and moreover, that a Determination of the COMMITTEE would not be final. They therefore declined meddling with such Matters, but came to the following Resolutions:

THAT Differences of this Nature, weaken the Dissenting Interest, and tend to bring Dissenters into Contempt. Providence has in several Instances favoured the Attempts of the DEPUTATION and COMMITTEE, to defend the legal civil Rights of the Dissenters against Oppression. This is their proper Business, and not to settle Disputes and Controversies in particular Churches, which should always be adjusted, with a Spirit of Meekness and Humility, by the Congregations themselves, or their Friends and Neighbours.

THAT as it is the undoubted Right of every Congregation of Protestant Dissenters in *England*, to chuse their own Ministers; they have also the sole Right to fix the Qualification of an Elector. And therefore it is the Opinion and Resolution of this COMMITTEE, that it be recommended to all Congregations, that before they come to the Choice of a Minister, it should be plainly settled by them, what kind of Persons should have votes: and that the Congregations be informed of this Opinion.

THIS Year the COMMITTEE printed 1000 more of their Cases for the Peers, and for others in the Administration of Government, who desired to have them; which they sent to all their Houses.

AND now the long desired Time came, when the Sheriff's Cause was finally heard at the Barr of the House of Lords; and after the most solemn Hearing, which lasted several Days, Judgment was given Unanimously by their Lordships, in Favour of the Dissenters. And their Judgment, together with the Transcript of the
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Record, were remitted by them to the City Court, and it is *filed* therein. This Affair, though closely followed by the COMMITTEE, has lasted above Fourteen Years, and has cost them, with the Assistance of others, about *Four Thousand Pounds* *.

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* THAT Posterity may have a right Notion of this Cause, it is thought proper to give the following Account thereof.

THE City of *London*, after several fruitless Attempts against Mr. *Grosvenor*, and other Dissenters, having found to their Cost, that the By-Laws then in force, could not reach the Dissenters; the Corporation made a new one, *Anno* 1747, which seemed Calculated to compel the Dissenters to fine; for great Numbers of them were forthwith nominated to the Office of Sheriff, and paid their Fines accordingly, amounting to above 15000 *l.* Till at length in the Year 1754, Messrs. *Streatfield*, *Sheafe* and *Evans*, were elected Sheriffs; but applying to the Committee, were by them encouraged to refuse serving the Office; upon which three separate Actions were commenced against them, for 600 *l.* each. That against Mr. *Streatfield* was attempted in vain, as he could not be found within the Jurisdiction of the Court. But those against Mr. *Sheafe* and Mr. *Evans* were brought in the Sheriff's Court, *London*, the 7th of *February*, 1755. And after considerable Delay, and much Expence (occasioned by the Dissenters being obliged to apply to the Court of Chancery, to inspect the City Books relating to the Office,) the Causes were argued in the Sheriff's Court, and Judgment given against the Dissenters in *September* 1757. Thereupon the Defendants *Sheafe* and *Evans*, by the usual Forms, were obliged to bring Writs of Error, returnable in the Court of Hustings, being the next City Court, of which *the Recorder of London* is Judge.

And as the Expences on the Defendants Side had already amounted to upwards of 1200 *l.* which would have been considerably less, had not several
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THE Dissenters at *Carmarthen*, applied to the COMMITTEE for a House left to their Meeting, which is detained from them, by the Heir at Law. They took Council's Opinion, and have ordered a Bill in Chancery to be filed to recover it.

A DISSENTER at *Tregony* in *Cornwall*, applied to the COMMITTEE for their Aid against a Justice who had distrained his Goods on the Conventicle Act. As the Justice continues obstinate, the COMMITTEE have taken the Opinion of Council in this Case, and are seeking Redress for him, in a Course of Law.

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Proposals to shorten the Causes, been refused. Application was also made to the Common Council, that they would only proceed in one of these Causes (the Merits of each being exactly the same) and that the Cause which stood still, should abide the Event of that which was proceeded in; but this was likewise refused.

THE Court of Hustings affirming the Judgment given in the Sheriff's Court. The Defendants Mr. *Sheafe* and Mr. *Evans*, sued out a *Certiorari*, returnable before a Court of Delegates, viz. Lord Chief Justice *Willes*, Lord Chief Baron *Parker*, Mr. Justice *Foster*, Mr. Justice *Bathurst*, and Mr. Justice *Wilmot*. The Court having heard Council several Days; and Lord Chief Justice *Willes* dying before Judgment was given, the remaining Delegates delivered their Opinions *seriatim* on the 5th of July 1762, and were unanimous in reversing the Judgment given in the Sheriff's Court, and Court of Hustings. Whereupon the City brought a Writ of Error, returnable before the House of Lords. Their Lordships, after hearing the Opinion of the rest of the Judges (except Mr. Justice *Yates*, who was ill,) were pleased, on the 4th of February 1767, to Order and Adjudge, that the Judgment given by the Commissioners Delegates, reversing the Judgment given in the Sheriff's Court, and Court of Hustings, be Affirmed.

THE Dissenters at *Werenford* in *Cumberland*, applied to the COMMITTEE for Relief against the Trustees of *Belford* Turnpike Road, who by putting up a Bar, obliged them to pay Toll as they went to Publick Worship, which seemed to be excepted in the Act. The COMMITTEE finding upon Enquiry, that this was not an Imposition upon Dissenters, as such, came to a Resolution, That it is not consistent with the Institution of this DEPUTATION to intermeddle therewith.

N. B. All Letters and Representations, relative to the Civil Affairs of the Dissenters, are desired to be directed to JASPER MAUDUIT, Esq; at HACKNEY, near LONDON.

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